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ABSTRACT

America is a sex-negative society. It is intolerant of diversity in sexual tastes and aversions. This paper explores the possible reasons why successful societies have frequently been erotically intolerant, and why sexually positive groups are usually small and insignificant groups in other parts of the world. The author discusses a set of axioms based on research in the behavioral sciences and analyzed from a social functionalist viewpoint. These axioms, put together, represent a theory about why many competitively successful societies such as ours have evolved maintaining negative sex norms. (Author/PC)

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WHY ARE MANY SOCIETIES SEX NEGATIVE?

A SOCIAL-FUNCTIONALIST THEORY

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The average American enjoys a rather wide range of foods. Pizza, roast beef, chicken noodle soup, ham, lobster, nonfat milk, fresh oranges --- you can eat them all, if you wish. Or, you can turn up your nose at those you don't like (or those that make you sick). Society doesn't tell an American that you MUST eat any particular dish, or that you must NOT consume something you like (so long as it doesn't harm you). And, you can limit yourself to a certain kind of food (say, vegetarian cooking, or kosher food), if you want to. America is a fairly "eating positive" culture, because we tolerate a pretty broad spectrum of culinary preferences and aversions.

American society also tolerates wide ranges of likes and dislikes in other activities. You can play football, badminton, hockey, go fishing, water skiing, climb mountains. If you like ALL of these sports, nobody worries about why you developed such a diverse set of athletic interests. And if you have an AVERSION to all except, say, football, it doesn't particularly bother society that your tastes are so narrow either.

If you go to college and study chemistry, sociology, art, history, political science and mechanical engineering no one denounces you for having an "unnatural" range of interests. Or, if you prefer anthropology and nothing else, that's o.k., too.

If you read science fiction, biography, cook books, and mystery stories, no one bothers about how variable your tastes are. (And, if you read only historical novels and can't STAND mystery stories and science fiction and cook books, few people worry much about THAT, either.) Your hobbies can be quite generalized (chess, sailboating, bridge, karate), or noticeably specialized (such as collecting 19th century French vases), and nobody worries much one way or the other.

But not in sex. If you like, say masturbating, oral intercourse with the opposite sex, oral intercourse with the SAME sex, anal intercourse between man and woman, anal intercourse between two men, and mutual masturbation with your spouse, society becomes concerned. VERY concerned. The law (in many states) tells you that you are a criminal. Some religions say you are a sinner. Some psychiatrists still tell you that you're sick. Some biologists say you are unnatural. People everywhere wonder (if they find out about you) how you could have developed such a wide range of sexual preferences. (In sex, "wide range of interests" is called "perversions.") Did your mother coddle you too much? Or not enough? Were you too distant from your father, or too close to your sisters? Did you fight too much (or not enough) with your brothers? Weren't you accepted by the kids at school?

And, if your sex preferences are <u>specialized</u> in any activity except penis-vagina intercourse (maybe you like masturbation and dislike anything else, for example, or perhaps you enjoy only oral coitus with the same sex), American society is equally concerned. You must have trouble relating to people. Or your mother was too restrictive or overly permissive or too neutral. Maybe there is something wrong with you biologically: mixed up hormones, the ir correct genes, or God knows what.

But, whatever the cause, you MUST be changed -- by police or psychologists or rabbis or biochemists or somebody -- whether you want to be modified or not. (And, if you don't WANT to change then that is supposedly "proof" that there is something wrong with your head, not that society is composed of a lot of nosey busybodies.)

In short, America is a sex-negative society. It is intolerant of diversity in sexual tastes and aversions (over and above obviously necessary laws against

harmful acts like rape and child molesting). Our society is not very food negative, hobby negative, or religion negative, but it is sex negative. Penis-vagina intercourse between husband and wife, in private, is the only form of sex NOT denounced by at least one of the powerful forces of our society -- the police, various clergymen, state legislatures, some psychiatrists and psychologists, many parents and teachers, and even a few allegedly liberated sex authors.

Why is American society sex negative? Indeed, why are MOST of the large, dominant nations of the world -- Red China, Russia, the European countries -- erotically intolerant ones? Geographically, sex negative societies occupy MUCH more of the earth's surface than do sex positive nations. If you wish to go about your daily business in the nude, or openly have a lover of your own sex, then you had better live in a small tribe along the Amazon river, or among the Siwan in Africa, rather than in mid-town San Diego.

It is the purpose of this paper to explore the possible reasons why successful societies have frequently been erotically intolerant, and why sexually positive groups -- and even they are usually not COMPLETELY sex positive -- are usually small and insignificant tribes somewhere off in the South American jungles, in Samoa or New Guinea, or in the middle of Africa.

In order to suggest possible reasons for this, I will adopt a point of view often called "social functionalism." To simplify my presentation, I will list a set of axioms based on research in the behavioral sciences and analysed from a social functionalist viewpoint. Put together, these axioms will be a theory about why many competitively successful societies such as ours have evolved and maintained negative sex norms. (I won't mention much of the research these axioms are based on during the body of my speech, in order to save time, but I'll be happy to talk about it afterwards.)

The first axiom is the central postulate of the social functionalist viewpoint. It is this: Every social custom and taboo is either functional, dysfunctional, or non-functional. For example, the Khaska Eskimo tribe, before they were changed by white missionaries, often sexually swapped wives and husbands. Now, if the death rate of the small Khaska tribe was high in their icy arctic environment, then they needed an equally high birth rate to avoid becoming extinct. And, if the fertility of their males ranged from high to low, and occasionally a sterile husband lent his wife to a fertile male guest, then the otherwise barren wife might occasionally get pregnant by the guests she was lent to. Thus, wife-lending[1] possibly produced a higher birth rate than the Khaska would otherwise have had, and thereby increased the probability that their society would survive. This is what is meant by a "functional" custom or taboo: it increases the probability that the society will survive, in comparison to the society's survival probability without the custom.

The anthropologist John Whiting has recently discussed another well-known, but more interesting, functional taboo.[2] It seems that a few societies prohibit sexual intercourse between a husband and wife up to five years after the birth of a child, during which time the wife continues to nurse their child. If a scientist from our culture visits these people and asks them why they avoid intercourse for so long, the scientist is likely to get a variety of vague replies. The people will say that intercourse during this period is biologically unnatural, or that the gods forbid it, or that it is shameful, or that the father's semen will poison the mother's milk and thus kill their nursing infant.

Now, Whiting noticed that societies which have this (to us) peculiar taboo are not randomly distributed around the world, but seem to be concentrated in

diverse geographical areas which have an exceptionally low protein content in their diets. Further research strongly suggested that there was a connection between low protein intake and the long post-partum taboo. In nearby societies with similar low-protein diets but without the sexual taboo, nursing mothers often become pregnant again, but suffer frequent miscarriages. Furthermore, their nursing infants also die frequently. Thus, their birth rates are much higher, but their survival rates are much lower, than in societies that prohibit sex between wife and husband for a prolonged period. Indeed, there are very few of these nearby societies without the post-partum taboo, possibly, because such societies have already become extinct.

Whiting's research suggested a probable reason for this: A lactating pregnant mother, on an extremely low protein diet, must either wean her nursing child and put it on the low protein adult diet, or continue nursing it. If she weans it, the inadequate amino-acid intake the baby gets from the adult food often produces marasmus and kwashiorkor - usually fatal protein deficiency diseases in small children. If the mother continues nursing her already-born child while she herself is pregnant, then the nursing infant and the fetus are competing for the miniscule amount of protein in their mother's diet -- and one or both of the babies is likely to die because of protein insufficiency. (Often, it is the already-born child who dies, because the mother's milk loses protein very rapidly.) Thus, the survival of the already-born child is enhanced if the mother does NOT become pregnant again -- which, in societies without adequate contraception means abstinence between husband and wife. The post-partum taboo is therefore a functional one.

We should note here that the Khaska Eskimo custom of wife lending is a sex POSITIVE one, whereas the post-partum taboo is sex NEGATIVE. But both norms

are apparently functional in that they help their respective societies survive.

A dysfunctional custom is one that REDUCES the probability that a society will survive. For example, some tribes eat mostly rice in their diets, but they have a custom of removing the outer B-vitamin containing part of the grain. These people often suffer beriberi, pellagra, and other B-vitamin deficiency diseases because their other food does not contain enough of these B-vitamin nutrients. Thus rice-polishing is a dysfunctional custom because it increases the death rate and reduces the probability that the society will survive.

Sexual customs which are dysfunctional are those such as making total celibacy necessary for all members -- a practice that a few 19th Century Protestant religions required. These religions no longer exist.(3)

A non-functional norm is one that is neither functional nor dysfunctional. Many customs such as the hair styles that a society has, their clothing styles, color preferences, preferred positions during penis-vagina coitus, and so on, may well have no effect either way on the long-term survival probability of the culture. Such customs are therefore non-functional.

Thus, to summarize the first axiom: Every custom of a society is either functional, dysfunctional, or non-functional.

Axiom Two is this: A custom of a society is not UNIVERSALLY functional, dysfunctional, or non-functional, but is so only in relation to the total condition of a particular society at a particular time. For example, the taboo against sex between a wife and husband for several years after a birth is a functional norm in societies with low protein diets -- but it would be dysfunctional in societies without that kind of diet, as it would lower their birth rate. Similarly, it may be functional for people in an overpopulated society to marry late, to engage in homosexual acts, to practice contraception and so on, but it would be

dysfunctional for people in an underpopulated social system to do these same things. Furthermore, a custom that is functional at one time may be dysfunctional at another. For example, homosexuality in an overpopulated Greek city-state might be functional but it would be dysfunctional decades later if the population size had dropped precipitously.(4) In other words, we cannot simply list one set of customs in a category marked "functional" and another set in a category labelled "dysfunctional." The laws of social functionalism are culturally and temporally RELATIVE, not culturally and temporally ABSOLUTE.

Axiom Three is this: The function or dysfunction of a social custom does not universally depend on the knowledge of the people who practice it. For example, the taboo against sexual intercourse between a husband and wife for several years after parturition does not require that the people understand the relation between protein levels and the diseases of kwashiorkor and marasmus in their nursing and unborn children. It is sufficient that the people think that coitus between the couple involved is biologically unnatural while the mother is nursing, or that the gods forbid it, or that semen poisons the mother's milk.(5)

Axiom Four is this: A society can survive with dysfunctional norms if it has enough strong functional norms to keep it going, or if enough people surreptitiously violate the dysfunctional norms. For example, in the middle ages, when the population of Europe was low, the Catholic Church preached that celibacy was better than sex. If everybody had followed that norm, European society would have disappeared in one generation. Thus, the celibacy norm was itself dysfunctional.

However, there was another Christian norm, which said that sex for some people was all right -- but only to produce children. Thus people could get married and practice penis-vagina intercourse -- but, nothing else. The church

forbade sexual practices which lower the birth rate -- such as oral intercourse, masturbation, homosexual acts, and so on. Thus a functional sex-negative norm which raised the birth rate (only penis-vagina intercourse was o.k.) was added to a dysfunctional sex-negative norm which lowered it (celibacy was desirable).(6)

Also, there were many worldly priests and nuns who violated the celibacy rule and produced illegitimate children. And, there were some adulterers around -- not unlike the Khaska Eskimos. These surreptitious violators of the dysfunctional norms were therefore probably performing a social function.

Axiom Five is this: An intrinsically dysfunctional norm can be made secondarily functional by an additional, modifying, norm. For example, the celibate priests and nuns of the middle ages may have helped society survive by running orphanages and hospitals in ways that married people might not have done. This is because the Catholic Church taught not only the dysfunctional norm of celibacy for priests and nuns, but also taught the additional, modifying norm for the celibates to use much of their time doing charitable things.(7) If a society has intrinsically dysfunctional norms, that society can survive if enough modifying norms convert most or all dysfunctional norms into functional ones. (This is another way of saying that a social norm is not absolutely functional or dysfunctional, but it is so only in relation to the total norms of a particular society.)

Axiom Six is this: A custom of a society intereacts with the biologically-programmed behavior of the people, in such a way that the custom is either redundant, formative, or counter-spontaneous, for each person.

To explain this rather abstract statement, let me use a purely hypothetical non-sexual example: Suppose that, in a particular society some infants are biolog-

ically programmed to be right-handed, while others are programmed to be ambidextrous, and still others are biologically programmed to be left-handed. (This biological programming could come from a variety of sources: the genes of the infant, the shape of the mother's uterus, the position of the fetus in the womb, pre-natal chemical influences, and so-on.)

Let's assume further, that the society then pressures its children to be right-handed -- by teaching them to use a fork with their right hand, to cut meat with a knife in their right hand, to print and write and shake hands and throw a baseball with their right hands, and so on. Thus, the society is ALSO programming the children to be right-handed.

Now, for those youngsters who are already biologically biased towards right-handedness, the later societal influences are redundant -- Society is teaching the kids to do what they would have done anyway. For ambidextrous children who learn to prefer their <u>right</u> hands, the social influence is formative: teachers and parents and playmates at school form a behavioral bias in these children where none existed previously. Finally, for youngsters who were biologically programmed to be left-handed, the social influence goes against their spontaneous impulses. This counter-spontaneous pressure from parents and teachers and peers probably causes some of these children to shift to their right hands, but probably does not affect other southpaw children, or possibly causes psychological problems for them.(8)

If we now apply this axiom to sexual behavior, we can say that cultural pressures to avoid some kinds of sex acts (say homosexuality), or to practice other kinds of sex (say, the missionary position), are forms of social programming that are either redundant, formative, or counter-spontaneous relative to the biological programs already contained in the nervous, endocrine, and pheromonal

systems of the individual people in a society. The 5-year post-partum sex taboo is probably counter-spontaneous for most married couples, as many people would re-commence intercourse as soon as the wife heals from childbirth. Biology creates the re-aroused sexual interest of the husband and wife but their group's sociology counter-spontaneously opposes the individuals' biology. Mate-swapping among the Eskimos may well be redundant in people who are sexually turned on by other people's spouses, because the social norms are pointing in the same direction as their biological programming. (Of course, complicated combinations of redundant, formative, and counter-spontaneous pressures are probably more common than the simplified examples I'm using here, but to keep things easy, I'll stick with the simplified examples.)

Axiom Seven is this: A custom of a society interacts with the unique learning experiences of the people in such a way that the custom is either redundant, formative, or counter-spontaneous for each person.

This axiom is the same as the last one, except that this one pertains to learning instead of biology. Let's use the right-handedness example as before, but convert it to a case of learning. Suppose that infants are not biologically programmed to be right or left-handed, but that each infant acquires whatever hand preference she/he has early in life -- by the way it first lies in the cradle, by whether the child is first rewarded for reaching out with the right or the left hand, and so on. Let's assume that after this early, unique, accidental programming, each child is raised in a society where parents and teachers and kids at school reinforce right-handed behavior. This later societal programming is, again, redundant, formative, or counter-spontaneous relative to the early unplanned learning of the child.

Axiom Eight is this: The norms of a society change the frequency of a behavior compared to the frequency of that behavior based on biology alone, or unique learning experiences alone. For example, let's convert the right-handed example to a hypothetical sexual case.

Suppose that, in a particular society, 60% of infants are biologically biased to be exclusively heterosexual, or they have early heterosexual learning experiences, while 30% are born with, or get imprinted with, bisexual programming, and 10% are born with a biological tendency to be exclusively gay, or are imprinted that way. (Again, the biological programming could come from a variety of sources: the genes of the infant, pre-natal hormones from the mother, and so on. The imprinting experiences could also be diverse: the caresses of and "smothering" from a close-binding, intimate mother, the inattention of a bland father, or whatever.)

Let's assume, further, that the culture surrounding the child supplies only heterosexual influences -- in the form of heterosexual adult models for the child to imitate, in the form of religious and biological beliefs and legal codes which say that heterosexuality is the only good thing, and so on. Now, parents, clergymen and peers are redundantly pressuring the 60% heterosexually inclined children to do what they would have done anyway. The bisexual 30% of the children will probably grow up heterosexual also, either because they fail to learn about their homosexual abilities, or because they suppress any gay tendencies they discover in themselves. The 30% ambisexually inclined people will therefore add to the 60% heterosexually inclined ones, thus making 90% of the adult population heterosexual. Finally, among the 10% of infants who are biologically programmed or are imprinted to be gay, some of them - let's say half - will conform to social pressure and act heterosexual. Therefore, an additional 5% is added to the

straight category, making 95% of the population heterosexual - compared to the 60% who would have been exclusively heterosexual based on biology or imprinting alone. So, to re-state Axiom Eight: the norms of a society change the frequency of a behavior (such as using the left hand. or engaging in homosexual acts) compared to the frequency of that behavior based on biology and unplanned, unique learning experiences alone.

Axiom Nine is this: Because society has the ability to use formative and counter-spontaneous pressure to modify people's behavior, that behavior does not strictly follow the Darwinian laws of natural selection. For example, if some exclusively gay people are that way because they have genes for being gay, then they won't mate and transmit these genes onto the next generation. Therefore, these people's genetically-transmitted exclusive homosexuality will disappear from the population in one generation. If, however, society pressures these people to marry and have children, and if this cultural pressure is frequently successful, then many gay people will marry and transmit their genes. Thus exclusive homosexuality would not follow the Darwinian laws of natural selection, but would continue at a higher rate than predicted by, for example, the Hardy-Weinberg laws in population genetics.(9)

Similarly, genetically bisexual people would have a lower rate of reproduction than would genetically exclusively heterosexual individuals, based on their biology alone. But, if society successfully pressures bisexual people to act exclusively in a heterosexual way, then bisexual persons would have the same rate of reproduction as straight individuals have. So, any genetic tendency towards bisexuality would be transmitted at the same rate as the genes for heterosexuality. In other words, functional social norms can compensate for dysfunctional genetic makeup. (These examples are purely hypothetical, of

course. I am not saying that sexual preference is genetically determined.) (10)

Axiom Ten is this: If functional social norms counter-spontaneously oppose dysfunctional early imprinting experiences, then those imprinting experiences are likely to be repeated in future generations. For example, if many young children acquire homosexual tendencies by some common kinds of experience which many kids have early in life, (rather than from biological pre-dispositions), and if enough of those children later grow up and are pressured to become heterosexual, then the society will survive, and the common kinds of imprinting experiences will also probably occur in some of the next generation of children, some of whom will be gay, but grow up acting straight, and so on. In other words, functional social norms can compensate for socially dysfunctional learning experiences, as well as for dysfunctional genes.

Axiom Eleven is this: The more counter-spontaneous a social norm is for the people in a society, the more intense that norm must be in order to get people to conform to it. For example, paying income tax seems to be counter-spontaneous for many citizens. Consequently, society must use a variety of powerful techniques such as passing laws, having an Internal Revenue Service, requiring people to file annual tax returns, and so on, in order to get people to engage in the functional behavior of paying taxes. In contrast to this, society does not have to pressure people to breathe, to drink water, to urinate, and so on, because such norms would be absolutely redundant: People are already sufficiently programmed biologically so that, even though, breathing, urinating, _etc._ are highly functional for a society, no social norms need to exist. When norms are completely redundant relative to biology and imprinting, then norms seldom occur. (11)

Axiom Twelve is this: A wide range of socially dysfunctional sex behaviors would exist in a society if that society did not have powerful, counter-spontaneous sex negative norms to reduce the frequency of those dysfunctional sexual activities. For example, in societies with V.D., promiscuity might be common and spread disease. In underpopulated societies, many people might engage in a great deal of masturbatory or homoerotic acts, and so on.

The final Axiom Thirteen is this: Before the advent of modern medicine, most societies needed a high birth rate to compensate for a high death rate, (particularly among children). Most societies also needed a stable family structure to educate the large numbers of children thus produced, and most societies needed effective ways to prevent the spread of incurable V.D.[12] Since many people would not spontaneously choose to remain virgins until marriage, and then live in a family-structured, penis-vagina intercourse - only lifestyle, avoiding promiscuity, those societies which evolved extremely strong functional norms to get people to live this way survived.[13] Or, if some people were encouraged to remain celibate (like nuns and priests and unmarried women), then EXTREMELY strong norms must have evolved in parallel to make sure that the celibates were socially functional and to make sure that the non-celibates had an even higher birth rate than they otherwise would have had, to compensate for the celibacy.

Similar food negative, sports negative, and hobby negative taboos have not evolved or spread because they would be dysfunctional or non-functional. For example, taboos against eating pork, eating beef, drinking milk, and so on, exist in certain religious and ethnic groups - but they are dysfunctional or non-functional for the generality of humans. Eating a wide range of foods pro-

duces balanced nutrition -- but having a wide range of sex reduces the birth rate and spreads disease. (Recent studies have shown that conditions like hepatitis, typhoid fever, and pin-worms are spread by anal sex, for example.) And, having a NARROW range of erotic preferences also lowers the number of births -- if that range is exclusively non-procreative (like homosexuality or masturbation).

Unfortunately, the world is rapidly shifting from underpopulation to overpopulation, and social diseases can often be prevented and cured (just as trichinosis can be prevented by cooking pork well). Therefore, the old sex-negative norms are becoming non-functional and dysfunctional. Will we keep them? If certain police, certain clergy, and other powerful forces have their way, we certainly will.

Footnotes

1. The term "wife-lending" is more accurate than the non-sexist term "mate-swapping" since the Khaska are a male chauvinist society who conceive of women as men's property. cf. Birket-Smith, K. The Eskimos. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1959.

2. Whiting, J. Effects of climate on certain cultural practices. In W. Goodenough (Ed.), Explorations in cultural anthropology. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

3. Olmstead, C.E. History of religion in the United States. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960. (esp. pp. 339 ff.)

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   Mathison, R.R. Faiths, cults and sects of America. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc. 1960. (esp. pp. 275 ff.)

4. Karlen, A. Sexuality and homosexuality: A new view. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1971 (esp. ch. 2).

   also

   Reinhold, M. Greek and Roman civilization. In R.D. Mead (Ed.) Hellas and Rome: The story of Greco-Roman civilization. New York: New American Library, 1972.

5. Whiting, op. cit.

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   Berger, P.L. and Luckmann, T. The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1967.

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   Barbu, Z. Problems of historical psychology. New York: Grove Press, 1960.

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   Dobzhansky, T. Religion, death, and evolutionary adaptation. In M.E. Spiro (Ed.) Context and meaning in cultural anthropology. New York: The Free Press, 1965.

6. Sommer, J. Catholic thought on contraception through the centuries. Liguori, Missouri: Redemptorist Fathers Press, 1970.

7. Sommers, op. cit.

Footnotes (continued)

8. Stein, M.L. Left-handed lib. Human Behavior, 1974.

9. Many clinical psychologists (especially Alfred Adler and his followers) have studied the phenomenon of "overcompensation" in which a person who is told that he is "inferior" in some way works extra hard to become "superior" in that same way. (For example, the 97 pound weakling who does exercises until he becomes a superman.) If some individuals with homosexual proclivities are told that they are "inferior" and then they overcompensate for their feelings of inferiority, they might behave more heterosexually than innate heterosexuals might do. The homosexuals could, paradoxically, thus produce MORE children than heterosexuals produce, and the percentage of the population carrying "gay" genes might INCREASE over time (contrary to present theories in population genetics. Of course, this speculation is as conjectural as the present theories, since the prevalence of overcompensation among latent homosexuals is unknown.) cf. Adler, A. Inferiority feeling and masculine protest. In Adler, A. The psychology of Alfred Adler. New York: Basic Books, 1956.

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Overton, R.K. Experimental studies of organ inferiority. Journal of Individual Psychology, 1958, 14, 62-64.

also

cf the chapter "Skills of the oppressed: Passing as straight" in Humphreys, L. Out of the Closets: The sociology of homosexual liberation. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1972.

also

Bailey, D.S. Homosexuality and the western Christian tradition. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1955.

10. There are two traditional views regarding the transmission of genetic traits that have recently been challenged. The first view is expressed (and challenged) by Dobzhansky: "Some writers have jumped to the conclusion that the genetic development of the human species was completed before culture appeared, and that the evolution of culture has replaced biological evolution. This is not true. The two evolutions go together, interacting and usually mutually reinforcing each other. There is feedback between genetics and culture. Culture is an adaptive mechanism supplemental to, but not incompatible with, biological adaptation. To be sure, adaptation by culture proved to be more efficacious, and, before all else, more rapid than adpatation by genes. This is why the emergence of the genetic basis of culture was the master stroke of the biological evolution of the human species." (Dobzhansky, T. Man and natural selection. In C.J. Bajema (Ed.) Natural selection in human populations. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971.) The other view is

that only heterosexuality was evolutionarily adaptive, so that bisexuality and homosexuality must have been eliminated from primate evolution long before homo sapiens appeared (and humans could not have evolved these traits, either). This view has been challenged, also: "Male-male sex play in primates obviously has no reproductive function: its role, both as recreation and as a way in which individuals can relate to each other, is to cement ape society. This is important, since the only other important male-male relationship among many apes is rivalry or aggression ... The importance of this ability to form "erotized" bonds between males is clear - if males, human or ape, were wholly unable to erotize their contacts with one another, and got no physical or emotional pleasure from contacts with fellow males, they would be left only with mechanisms to express hostility and rivalry, and societies would be limited, as they are in gibbons, to separate territorial families on fighting terms. The whole organization of human society as we know it would have been impossible ... It has been asked why evolution did not get rid of a form of sex-role fixing which can interfere with reproduction in this way. The answer is probably that the potential for male-male love has such social advantages that its occasional disadvantages, for individuals in whom it is exaggerated, are outweighed." Anonymous. Bisexuality. In A. Ellis (Ed.) The best of Forum: The international journal of human relations. New York: Forum International, Ltd. 1973.

11. White, L. The science of culture: A study of man and civilization. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 1969. See esp. ch. 10.

12. Ford, C.S. A comparative study of human reproduction. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1964.

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Young, W. Eros denied: Sex in Western society. New York: Grove Press, 1964.

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Comfort, A. The anxiety makers: Some curious preoccupations of the medical profession. New York: Dell Publishing, Inc. 1967.

13. Nelson, H. A framework for thought: An attempt at the scientific interpretation of history. New York: Pageant Press, 1961.

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Kolata, Fina B. Human biography: Similarities between man and beast. Science, 1974, 185, 134-135.